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➤BOOK NOTICES.◀

MICAH.*

This little work shows the usual fine scholarship, genial spirit and thorough learning of its accomplished author. It is a most excellent commentary in giving a natural, simple and clear exposition of the meaning of the English text. Dr. Cheyne, however, like many of those who no longer hold the traditional views of the authorship of the Pentateuch, writes apparently with the discussion of this question ever in mind. Hence this note on VII., 6: "*dishonoureth*] Lit. 'treateth as a fool.' The same verb in the same form occurs in Deut. XXXII., 6. It is unsafe, however, to argue that Deuteronomy must have been already written in the time of Micah, for we also find the word in Jer. XIV., 21; Nah. III., 6."

Such a note is irrelevant in a work of this size and character. It introduces the discussion of an outside question, which has nothing to do with the explanation of the verse.

On IV., 10 we fail also to see the force of his objection to the words "And thou shalt go even to Babylon," having been in the original text, because "We read in v. 12 that Jehovah has brought the hostile nations to Jerusalem that they may be destroyed there, which seems not to allow space for a transportation of the Judeans to Babylon." There is nothing in the prophecy to indicate that the period of punishment or distress, signified by the "pangs" and "dwelling in the field" of verses 9, 10, was necessarily a short one. In verse 10, a future captivity is announced, in verses 11-13, the final triumph of Zion over her enemies. Their juxtaposition is natural. A difficulty has been here raised which does not exist.

Of chapter v. we are told that verses 5 and 6 appear to have been added by an after-thought of the prophet, because "it was not clear who the many nations and many peoples of IV., 11, 13, were," and because "the prophet in the first gush of inspiration had omitted the period of foreign rule over the land of Israel."

Then we are told with a gush of enthusiasm on the part of our commentator: "How greatly our idea of biblical literature gains in distinctness by the insight we are now acquiring into the methods and processes of the prophetic writers and editors!" Yes, a certain idea of biblical literature; that a prophecy may have been written at one sitting or two; that a certain paragraph may have been the first or second thought of the writer. But how much is this idea of biblical literature helping us to understand the precious contents of the Bible, to bring forth more clearly and beautifully its teachings? To some extent, it is true; yet not so much as would seem to be implied. Perhaps Dr. Cheyne, unless writing for specialists, has emphasized too strongly some points of this kind.

* THE CAMBRIDGE BIBLE FOR SCHOOLS. General editor, J. J. S. Perowne, D. D., Dean of Peterborough. MICAH; with Notes and Introduction by the Rev. T. K. Cheyne, M. A. Cambridge: University Press. New York: Macmillan & Co. Pp. 64. Price, 40 cents.